(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to amend the Article 124 of the Constitution for empowering the Executive with the rights of selection, appointment and transfer of Chief Justice and Judges of High Courts and Supreme Court;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the details of progress made so far in this regard; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) and (b) In its 14th Report of "Reform of Judicial Administration" (1958), the Law Commission had recommended that "The practice of appointing the senior-most puisne Judge of the Supreme Court as the Chief Justice of India, is not desirable. Instead, the most suitable person whether from the court, the Bar or from the High Courts should be chosen" The Government then decided that the recommendation should be accepted and that the appointment need not go to the seniormost Judge if another Judge was considered more suitable.

(c) to (f) The Government decided to introduce a Constitution Amendment Bill in Parliament to make changes in the existing system of appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court, Chief Justices of the High Courts, Judges of the High Courts and transfer of Judges of the High Courts. The draft Constitution (Eighty-Second Amendment) Bill, 1997 has accordingly been circulated to members of Lok Sabha.

[English]

Chari Committee Report

5514. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Minister has since examined the Chari Committee report on integrated coal policy; and

(b) if so, the Government's reaction to some of the salient features of the Chari Committee recommendations particularly the survival strategy for State Units in decontrolled regime?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government have considered the Chari Committee Report on Integrated Coal Policy and have decided as follows:-

(i) Deregulation of the prices and distribution of D grade of non-coking coal, hard coke and soft coke with immediate effect.

(ii) Allowing Coal India Limited (CIL) and the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) to fix the prices of E, F and G grades of non-coking coal till 1st January 2000, once every six months by updating the cost indices as per the escalation formula contained in the 1987 report of the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices.

(iii) Allowing CIL and SCCL to fix the prices of E, F and G grades of non-coking coal in relation with the market prices and to distribute these grades of coal after the 1st January, 2000.

(iv) Subject to legislative approval, the setting up of an independent body to monitor detailed and regional exploration of coal and lignite resources in the country;

(v) Subject to legislative approval, the allocation of new blocks on the basis of a competitive bidding process in which Indian companies including nationalised coal companies may participate;

(vi) Subject to legislative approval, the establishment of a Regulatory Body which would perform an appellate function to resolve the price disputes between the producers and the consumers.

Integrated Infrastructural Development Project

5515. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Orissa Government has submitted any proposals for setting up of Integrated Infrastructure Development Project at Khurda, Paradeep and Rayagada;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether no formal sanction of funds for IID centre at Khurda has yet been issued;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by which the formal sanction of funds for IID centre at Khurda is likely to be accorded; and

(f) the remaining proposals likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The Government received a proposal for setting up of Integrated Infrastructure Development Project at Khurda which was sanctioned on 20.6.96.

(c) to (e) The Central Government has not released any funds because the State Government is yet to complete the requisite formalities. The Small Industry Development Bank of India has sanctioned a loan of Rs. 296 lakhs.

(f) No proposal is pending with the Central Government.

Industrial Production

5516. SHRI B. L. SHANKAR: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the target of Industrial production fixed for 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) whether the target has been achieved during 1996-97;